



CALHOUN STREET
(looking West)

PROLOGUE

In April of 1998, the UC/CH Steering Committee made of the City of Cincinnati, the University of Cincinnati, the Clifton Heights Business Association and the CUF Neighborhood Association selected D'Agostino Izzo Quirk Architects, Somerville, MA as planners to study the Clifton Heights business district ("The District"), and propose physical changes and capital improvements to revitalize the District's environment. At the onset of the study, D'AIQ reviewed what Clifton Heights is -- and is not. It is a meeting point between the southern edge of the University and the residential community: defined by two major axis, Calhoun Street and McMillan Avenue, each with its own character and function within the larger frame work of the city. Calhoun Street and McMillan Street are busy commercial arteries connecting major roads to the east and west. These two axis define the commercial spine that occurs in between and is used as the skeletal structure for redevelopment.

The six block district is also, by design, a business district that is bordered by residential and institutional uses. The District is dominated by fast food drive-thrus, parking, and deteriorated housing stock. It has limited green space, cultural institutions, places for street events to happen or important generators of night activity such as hotel, cinema and entertainment. Retail activity lacks vigor and critical mass. Except for certain long established small shops, the District is no longer a major destination shopping area.

Restoring vigor and diversity through reworking of the street environment and the increased mix of retail is the purpose of these plans. We believe that small, often obvious changes, will have a heartening ripple effect. Pleasant, walkable streets will set the stage for new shops and restaurants, stimulating noon-hour and leisure uses, and livelier evenings. As people are motivated to walk the streets, a net reduction in congestion will mean a net increase in urban pleasure and economic growth. The ultimate effect should be the knitting together of the University and residential community into something even more significant -- an identifiable uptown business neighborhood of memorable spirit and urbanity.